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# The City of Traverse City

## Office of the City Clerk

GOVERNMENTAL CENTER  
400 Boardman Avenue  
Traverse City, MI 49684  
(231) 922-4480  
tcclerk@traversecitymi.gov



Dear Business Owner:

### **Subject: Sidewalk Café Permit**

Thank you for your interest in adding to our community by providing a positive contribution to our outside dining environment! Enclosed are Sidewalk Café Guidelines and a Permit Application to occupy a portion of adjacent City right-of-way to place tables and chairs in conjunction with selling and consuming food and/or alcohol. This permit is available April 1 until November 1 of each year.

Traverse City Code of Ordinances Chapter 1020 has been amended by the City Commission to reflect changes to requirements for operating a sidewalk café. These changes are as follows:

- All sidewalk café operators must have a City-approved, anchored, hard-edge barrier surrounding their café.
- This hard-edge barrier should be placed in a manner that allows for a minimum five-foot unobstructed pedestrian passageway, excluding tree grates, trash cans, etc.
- When the hard-edge barrier is not abutting to the building, a minimum two-foot unobstructed right-of-way between the curb and the barrier shall be maintained.
- All hard-edge barriers, furniture, and equipment associated with the café shall be removed each day at the close of business.
- All trash associated with the café shall be removed at the close of each business day.
- Sidewalk café applicants shall submit an accurate site plan depicting all elements of their café; you will find a sample site plan on page 4 of the application packet.

**A representative from the City Clerk's Office will be in contact with you to set up an on-site inspection of your Sidewalk Café.**

We hope this information is helpful. The City of Traverse City looks forward to working with you to compliment the dining experience in Traverse City! Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact anyone in the City Clerk's Office at (231) 922-4480 or contact Kim Lautner, Licensing and Election Specialist at [klautner@traversecitymi.gov](mailto:klautner@traversecitymi.gov).

Most sincerely,

Benjamin C. Marentette, MMC  
City Clerk

*These guidelines are not intended to substitute the ordinance, and may not contain all provisions as noted in the ordinance. All applicants should familiarize themselves and adhere to the Traverse City Code of Ordinances Chapter 1020 Sections 1020.07 and 1020.08 Sidewalk Café Permits which can be viewed in their entirety at [www.traversecitymi.gov/downloads/1020.pdf](http://www.traversecitymi.gov/downloads/1020.pdf).*

## **Definition**

A *Sidewalk Café* is any group of tables, chairs or other seating fixtures and all associated items placed within City right-of-way and intended for the purpose of consumption of food or beverage by patrons, when such is located adjacent to a food or beverage service establishment having the same operator.

## **Purpose**

Sidewalk Cafés contribute to a vibrant urban culture and make the streets of Traverse City more dynamic places to walk, socialize, and dine. Sidewalk Cafés are temporary dining areas that occupy part of the public right-of-way during dining establishment hours with the sidewalk café, closing by 11:00 p.m. each night. This document is a guide to creating temporary sidewalk cafés that are safe and attractive to the restaurant patrons and pedestrians.

The Sidewalk Café Guidelines provide acceptable dimensions to café access and for public right-of-ways, sidewalk café barriers, and the layout of outdoor service areas. The City of Traverse City encourages the use of durable and high-quality outdoor furnishings and materials to increase the safety and comfort of residents and visitors of sidewalk cafés. The diagrams in this document illustrate examples of sidewalk café designs and photographs show acceptable sidewalk café furnishings.

Sidewalk Cafés enhance the public realm and motivate City and regional residents to patronize Traverse City's eating establishments.

## **Unobstructed Pedestrian Passage Requirements/Clear Zone**

All sidewalk cafés must allow for a minimum five-foot unobstructed pedestrian passage way on the sidewalk. No element of the sidewalk café, including umbrellas, planters, barriers, trash cans or signage, may obstruct the pedestrian way. Light poles, tree wells, fire hydrants, and other items may not fall within the pedestrian path allowed between the curb and the leading edge of the sidewalk café. It is important that you work with the ADA Coordinator/Assistant City Manager Penny Hill to assure you are meeting the requirements for a minimum five-foot pedestrian passage way on the sidewalk.

## Serving Alcohol

In every case where alcoholic beverages are being served and sold, a one square foot sign must be posted in a prominent location that indicates “No Beverages beyond the Barrier of this Sidewalk Café.” A copy of this sign shall be attached to the application. Sidewalk Cafes serving alcohol must also be designed and operated in accordance with Michigan Liquor Control Commission (LCC) requirements. *Please determine the applicable requirements before preparing or submitting your Sidewalk Café Application Form by contacting the LCC office. They may be reached by telephone at: 1-866-813-0011.*

## Fees Required

The application fee for Sidewalk Cafés where no alcohol is to be served is \$110.00, annually.

The application fee for Sidewalk Cafés where alcohol will be served is \$165.00, annually.

## Insurance Coverage

All Sidewalk Café applicants are required to provide a certificate of General Liability in the amount of \$1 Million per occurrence, naming the City of Traverse City as additional insured, as well as provide an **Endorsement** to the policy naming the City of Traverse City as additional insured.

For those Sidewalk Café applicants who are requesting permission to sell and serve alcohol, you are required to provide Liquor Liability coverage in the amount of \$1 Million per occurrence, also naming the City of Traverse City as additional insured. .

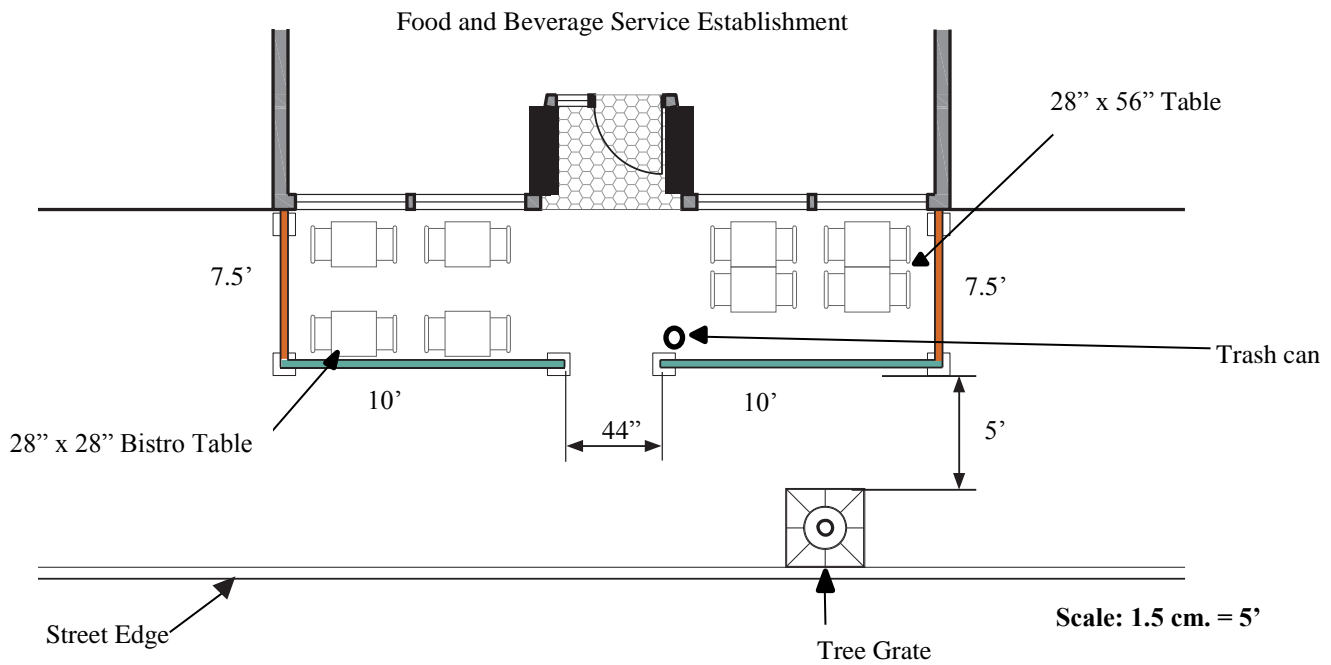
## Site Plan

A site plan drawn to scale depicting the measurements and elements of your Sidewalk Café must accompany all Sidewalk Café applications. The site plan should be no larger than 11” x 17,” clearly drawn with an accurate scale. The site plan shall depict the dimensions and placement within the sidewalk café of the following:

- The placement of a hard edge barrier
- Tables and Chairs
- Planters
- Wait-staff booths
- Trash cans
- Any other items within the sidewalk café

If a site plan is deemed unacceptable by any approving department, the Sidewalk Café application will not be approved until required adjustments are made.

***See Sample Site Plan Below***



### Required Right-of-Way Permit and Barriers

To ensure there is a five-foot unobstructed pedestrian passageway, the perimeter of all sidewalk cafés shall be enclosed by a hard edge barrier which is anchored, durable, removable, and maintained in good condition. For barriers that have an outside access point, the dining establishment is responsible for maintaining such access point. The requirement for a hard edge barrier may be waived by the ADA Coordinator/Assistant City Manager Penny Hill if determined unnecessary to ensure the five-foot unobstructed pedestrian passageway is maintained. The placement of required barriers will be marked on the sidewalk by the Code Enforcement Officer Mike Trombley and should be placed in a manner that maintains an unobstructed five feet wide pedestrian walking path. **For those barriers near the curb, a minimum two feet wide right of way must be maintained between the barrier and the curb.**

If planning to anchor to the sidewalk, it is important that you work with City Engineering Department to start the process of obtaining a right-of-way permit. This process will begin after your on-site inspection has taken place. *Without a right-of-way permit, an anchoring system cannot be installed into the sidewalk.*

Generally, barriers are 36" in height and must be approved by the City Planning Director. Access openings must be kept clear of all materials and should measure no less than 44 inches in width.

All barriers and other elements utilized by the sidewalk café shall be removed each day when the business closes. If anchoring points have been placed in the sidewalk, they shall be capped immediately following the removal of barriers to prevent tripping hazards.

## Acceptable Barriers



## Renewal of Permit

Sidewalk Café Permits are valid from April 1 to November 1 of each year, and must be renewed annually. If you wish to renew your permit and had two or more violations in previous permit year, the City is unable to renew your permit.

## On-Site Inspection

After your application has been submitted, the City Clerk's Office will work to set up an on-site inspection of your sidewalk café. There, a determination for placement of your barrier will be made.

## More Information

For more information, visit [www.traversecitymi.gov](http://www.traversecitymi.gov). At this website, applicants can access the ordinance sections pertaining to Sidewalk Cafés, the application packet, and contact information for all City Departments involved in approving Sidewalk Café applications.



**CITY OF TRAVERSE CITY  
APPLICATION FOR SIDEWALK CAFÉ**



This application is for the placement of tables and chairs, planters, and windscreens in the City's right-of-way for selling and consuming food, beverages and alcoholic beverages at a food service establishment (this permit is not for preparation of food and beverages, only for the sale and consumption).

Name of Food Establishment: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Business hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you reviewed the guidelines for Sidewalk Cafés and the Sidewalk Café Ordinance?

☐ Yes      ☐ No

Will you be serving/selling alcoholic beverages?

☐ Yes      ☐ No

Is a copy of your required one square foot sign stating "No Alcoholic Beverages beyond the Barrier of this Sidewalk Café" attached?

☐ Yes      ☐ No      ☐ N/A

Has the appropriate fee been attached?

☐ Yes      ☐ No

Have you attached the required insurance coverage naming the City of Traverse City as additional insured and the endorsement which also names the City of Traverse City as additional insured?

☐ Yes      ☐ No

Is a site plan which is drawn to scale attached to the application showing all elements including tables, chairs, planters, wait-staff booths, etc., their placement and dimensions of the proposed sidewalk café?

☐ Yes      ☐ No

**The undersigned, declares and says he/she wishes to be permitted to perform the operation, service or act stated hereon and that the statements made above are true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief. The undersigned further says that he/she will comply**

**with all provisions of the ordinances of the City of Traverse City relative to the operation, service or act for which the permit is requested. The undersign further agrees to hold the City of Traverse City free and harmless from all liability which may be imposed upon it, to reimburse the City of Traverse City for all expenses of litigation in connection with the defense of claims as such liability and claims may arise because of negligence in the performance of the work or act for which the permit was issued.**

**The applicant acknowledges that the City may be required from time to time to release records in its possession. The applicant hereby gives permission to the City to release any records or materials received by the City from the applicant as it may be requested to do so as permitted by the Freedom of Information Act, MCL 15.231 et seq.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant